

Record tourism season predicted for state

AAA MICHIGAN predicts that we will have a record tourism season in the state this summer, because of reduced gasoline prices, increases in out-of-state visitors and a healthy consumer outlook.

The cash register could ring up as much as \$8.2 billion, compared to \$7.6 billion last year. The travel season is already off to a strong start, with AAA Michigan travel routings up 10 percent for the first four months of 1986, with 19 percent more out-of-state visitors serviced this year than last.

A recent USA Today poll of travelers listed Michigan as one of the nation's top 11 vacation destinations.

If you are one of the thousands of state residents who plan to enjoy your own back yard this summer, here are some useful pieces of information to speed you on your way:

• **90BLO** Island opened with its new 314-foot-high Sky Tower offering an aerial view of two states and one Canadian province. There is a new Haunted Theater and a new boat, which doubles the passenger capacity from Gibraltar.

This 272-acre island in the Detroit River has been under the renewing hand of AAA Michigan since 1983, so if you haven't been there in a while you will be pleasantly surprised.

• The Frankenthum Bavarian Festival, which fills everybody's favorite small town with frivolity every year, is June 14-21.

• The 28th International Freedom Festival is June 20 through July 6 so that the U.S. and Canada can celebrate their birthdays together along the longest friendly border in the world.

• **Henry Ford Estate** - Fair Lane - is offering several programs for children June 1 through the end of August. There is a free open house June 15 and July 6, otherwise it costs \$5 a child, with a \$10 group deposit, for the 30-minute programs. There will be an 1890s party with 19th century games, historic toys and food, for groups only on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

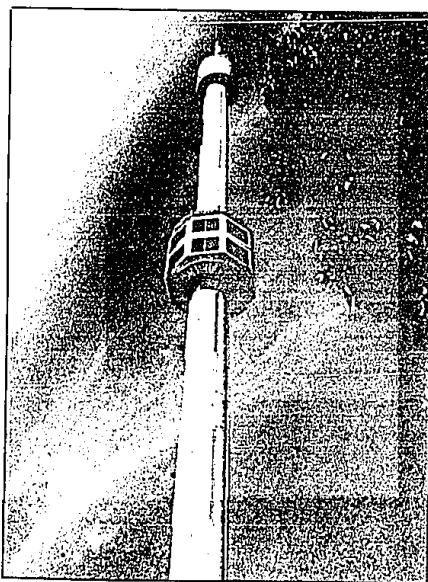
• **Rural Roots**, focusing on a miniature farm house built by Henry Ford for the 1924 Michigan State Fair, is open to everybody Wednesday, Thursdays and Saturdays at 11:00 a.m.

Everybody also may attend Henry Ford's Grand Experience, recreating the activities that Ford shared with his grandchildren; they are at 11:30 a.m. Fridays and 1:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. Sundays.

For more information, call 593-5590.

• The Birmingham Community House has a lot of things going on this summer. One example: the Chesaning Showboat evening leaving at 3 p.m. July 14 and returning at 3 a.m. after browsing the Chesaning Old Home Shoppe, having dinner at Heritage House, watching the 1986 star attraction, Magic Osmond. The cost is \$40 a person. Call 644-5832.

I WENT to an interesting dinner in a foreign country last week. Those of you who don't want to travel to an overseas destination this year might want to follow my



A new 314-foot-high Sky Tower offering an aerial view of two states and one Canadian province now graces Boblo Island.

footsteps on this one. It's not far, just across the Detroit River, where the Hilton International Hotel has launched a series of what they call United States Presidents Dinners.

It's a promotion of course, designed to Canada, but I must admit they've done a first-class job. And there is more to come.

The Windsor Hilton surprised and pleased local diners by serving authentically researched and cooked early Canadian food dishes

when it first opened its doors on Riverside Drive West, two blocks west of Quillette. This is an extension of the same idea.

EVERY TUESDAY through May and June the restaurant will serve a special dinner honoring U.S. President George Washington on the Park Terrace. No ordinary dinner, but an eight-course dinner that's as close as they can make it to what would have been served in Martha Washington's kitchen.

Take a gander at this menu: Tiny Smithfield hams with watercress and celery seeds; An artichoke pie called Harty Choak Pie with marjoram sauce; Martha Washington's fresh crab soup; Minicement stuffed onions on a winter sauce;

Dressed greens with Mount Vernon vinaigrette. That all leads up to the main course - Scotch dollops (thin slices of braised lamb with capers, anchovies, oysters and lemon sauce), stoved potatoes, glazed onions and asparagus "a la petit pot."

This is followed by George Washington's cherry bread-and-butter pudding and Martha Washington's bonbons, served in a tiny paper bag with the recipe attached. Wines are extra, but the \$50 price tag includes tax and tip.

That's \$50 Canadian, about \$35 U.S. The food is interesting and well prepared and the setting fine.

THE PARK TERRACE is one of the best places in the area to watch the nightly spectacle of sundown, as daylight fades from the river and the artificial lights go on across the water in Detroit.

If you read this page regularly, you know that I don't usually talk about restaurants or promote dining situations - we've got dining

travel

columnist for that - but this seemed to be a small travel adventure waiting to happen. If the series works, they plan to have another one soon honoring Thomas Jefferson.

THERE IS good news/bad news about another close-to-Michigan summer event, dear to many hearts in this area. The good news is that you can once again ride the

1916 steam train hauled by the Cuyahoga Valley Line through Cuyahoga Valley National Park near Cleveland, with stops at Hale Farm and Western Reserve Village.

The bad news is that the Cuyahoga Valley Line was notified May 6 that the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Co. would not be able to renew its lease to run the excursion train over B&O tracks because the railway company is negotiating the sale of part of those tracks.

The CVL train will still run, but its season is now limited to Aug. 2 through Oct. 19.

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